

# Supporting people with learning disabilities to live longer, healthier lives

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# Overview

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In April 2018 NICE published their guideline on:

## **Care and support of people growing older with learning disabilities**

This provides evidence based recommendations to support practice.

In this webinar we will be exploring some of these recommendations, looking to bring them to life through examples and talking about how they may work in practice.

# Supporting people with learning disabilities to live longer, healthier lives

The Guideline Committee met regularly for over 2 years and the group included:

- people with learning disabilities
- people with family carer backgrounds
- health and social care professionals
- commissioners
- providers
- academics / researchers

This group membership brought a breadth of knowledge and insight reflected in the final guideline.

The guideline's recommendations cover care and support for adults with learning disabilities as they grow older. They include identifying changing needs, planning for the future, and delivering services, including health and social care and housing. They aim to support people to access the services they need as they get older.

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The guideline is supported by:

- An Easy Read version and video to explain the recommendations
- A Quality Standard for care and support of people growing older with a learning disability - due to be published in July

The purpose of this guideline is to help commissioners, providers, social workers and social care staff to identify, plan and provide for the care and support needs of people growing older with learning disabilities, and their families and carers.

It is set out in sections making it easier to use:

- Overarching principles
- Organising and delivering care and support
- Identifying and assessing care and support needs
- Planning and reviewing care and support
- Identifying and managing health needs
- End of life care
- Staff skills and expertise

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The guideline starts by setting all this in context:

**People with learning disabilities have a poorer health profile than the general population.**

The Guideline Committee developed some overarching principles with the aim of improving health. These focus on:

- Access to services and person-centred care
- Communicating and making information accessible
- Decision-making, mental capacity and consent
- Involving people, family members, carers and advocates

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Today we are going to explore 4 topics in relation to some of those recommendations:

- Involving people, family members, carers and advocates.
- Raising awareness of potential health needs.
- Promoting health and wellbeing.
- The importance of health checks, including the annual health check.

# Involving people, family members, carers and advocates



# Involving people, family members, carers and advocates

11.9 - Health and care practitioners should listen to, **actively involve** and **value** key members of the person's support network in the planning and delivery of their current and future care and support, if the person agrees to this.

## Discussion points;

- Who might be part of someone's support network?
- Why might this not always happen?
- What are some of the common barriers?
- How we might overcome them?
- How might this change over time?
- How do we review / maintain people's involvement over time?



# Raising awareness of potential health needs



# Raising awareness of potential health needs

1.5.11 - Recognise that people with learning disabilities may need additional health surveillance to **help them identify** and communicate **symptoms of age-related conditions**.

1.5.14 - **Discuss** with people the **changes that may occur with age**. Ask them about and monitor them for symptoms of common age-related conditions or changes in any existing conditions.

## Discussion points:

- What do we mean by age-related conditions?
- Who needs to know / understand / be aware of these age-related conditions?
- How might we work on raising awareness with each group?
- What might be the barriers to this happening?
- How might we overcome them?

# Promoting health and wellbeing



# Promoting health and wellbeing

1.2.11 - Commissioners and service providers should provide opportunities for people with learning disabilities to **meet up and socialise**, for instance through social clubs and support groups.

1.2.12 - Commissioners and service providers should ensure there is a wide range of **community-based physical activity programmes** available and encourage people to take part to promote their health and wellbeing. Example include dancing, swimming, bowls, using the gym, organised walks and chair-based exercise classes.

## Discussion points:

- What do we mean by health and well-being?
- Who needs to know / understand / be aware of this?
- How might we work on addressing this with each group?
- How do we bridge the gap between awareness and behaviour? (what we know versus what we do)

# The importance of health checks, including the annual health check



# The importance of health checks, including the annual health check

1.5.12 - Offer annual health checks to older people with learning disabilities as long as these are followed by prompt referral to specialist services wherever needed. Explain what annual health checks involve and how to arrange them. Record any actions identified by the annual health check in the person's health action plan.

1.5.13 - Offer older people with learning disabilities the same routine screening and health checks as other older people.

1.5.17 - Give people clear, accessible and practical information and advice about keeping well as they grow older. Tell them about, and help them access, services such as breast screening, smear tests, testicular and prostate checks, dental checks, hearing and sight tests, and podiatry.

## Discussion points:

- What do we mean by Annual Health Checks and routine screening / health checks?
- What might be the barriers to them happening?
- How might we overcome those barriers?
- What are the benefits of having a health action plan?

# Supporting people with learning disabilities to live longer, healthier lives

Ensuring integrated, person-centred care and support for people growing older with learning disabilities

This will mean health and social care practitioners and providers involving and listening to the person and their family and carers, and agreeing a care plan that reflects their needs and aspirations. Offering an annual health check, including explaining what it will involve and how to arrange it, is an important part of this. It will also mean challenging assumptions and looking beyond the person's learning disability to provide the support needed to help them live an active, community-involved life.

Ensuring a well-trained and supported workforce, with the knowledge needed to support people growing older with learning disabilities.

- Health and social care services are structured in a way that tends to mean practitioners work in either learning disability or older people's services, and their training and support reflects this. Moving to a workforce with expertise from across both disciplines may be challenging to achieve.

Planning and commissioning local health, social care and housing services to meet the needs of the local population.

- Commissioners need to know the size of their local population of adults with learning disabilities, and any likely future growth in this population. Learning disability services are often seen as separate from other services, but all pathways of care and support need to consider the needs of people with learning disabilities order to improve access and funding.

# Supporting people with learning disabilities to live longer, healthier lives

General pointers for organisations when putting NICE guidelines into practice:

- Raise awareness through regular communication
- Identify leads / champions with an interest in the topic
- Carry out a baseline review and identify current gaps
- Develop an action plan
- Implement and Review

This isn't just about organisations its about all of us as individuals too.

Do not let yourself be overwhelmed by the scale of the challenge – commit to doing one thing differently as a result of today's Webinar – you obviously have an interest or you would not be here - so in the words of Mahatma Gandhi....

**“You must be the change you wish to see in the world”**



# Supporting people with learning disabilities to live longer, healthier lives

- [Care and support of people growing older with learning disabilities](#) – guideline
- [Care and support of people growing older with a learning disability](#) – quality standard to be published July 2019
- [Person-centred future planning](#) – quick guide



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Thank you for joining us today

Any Questions?